

Abort, Retry, Ignore...



Computers Are Easy User Group



March 2004

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Volume XX

Issue 3

What up with the Website?

By John Spizzirri

You may or may not have noticed that the CAUEG.ORG Web site is no longer functioning. At the January general meeting I asked for volunteers for Webmaster. John St. Clair and Frank Braman stepped forward to take on that task. Kathy Groce, our newsletter editor, also volunteered to assist. At the January board meeting, the board voted to move the Web site to another Web hosting company, as the hosting we received from Webcentix for free did not allow anyone other than Rick Scalzo to act as Webmaster. The board thought this action necessary as Rick's work schedule prevented timely updates of the Web site.

At the February board meeting, John St. Clair gave Rick the information necessary for the transfer of the domain registration. Rick had paid the previous domain registration fee without submitting a bill to our treasurer, Lynn Johnson. The site was taken off line on March 9th pending a payment to Rick for the domain registration of CAEUG.ORG.

Rick sent the board and John St. Clair an e-mail detailing the transition on March 7th. Here, in part, is the text of that letter:

This portion of the article was removed at the writer's request.

(con't on page 3)

Calendar
of
Events

!!!IMPORTANT!!!
Meeting dates for
2004
See page 10
for all confirmed
dates.
Time
remains the same.

March 27
John Spizzirri
Will have a
presentation of
MS Office 2003
software

MEETING PLACE
will be the
Glenside Public
Library

SEE YOU
THERE!!

COD Dates
April 25, 2004
May 23, 2004
June 27, 2004
July 25, 2004
August 29, 2004

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CAEUG OFFICERS & CHAIRPERSONS



President	John Spizzirri
V.P. (Programs)	Billy Douglas
Secretary (& donuts)	Al Skwara
Treasurer	L. Johnson
Newsletter Editor	Kathy Groce
Membership Chairperson & Circulation Manager	Pete Nicchia
CAEUG COD Coordinator & Publicity	Terry Moye
Software Reviewer	Brian Noon
Webmaster	
& Technical Consultant	Richard Scalzo
Coffee Service	Joan Thompson
Picnic Chairpersons	Mike Goldberg Roger Kinzie

Reminder: You'll get better, faster service if you use CAEUG in the subject of your e-mail.

ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER:

This printed version of our newsletter was laid out using Adobe's Pagemaker Version 7.0 for Windows and was printed on a HP Laserjet III. Our group's membership database is maintained using MS Access and address labels are printed using MS Access software. Our checking account records are kept in Quicken software.

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Permission is granted to reproduce any or all parts of this newsletter for personal use. Also granted is permission to reproduce for publication any part of this newsletter provided that a copy of the publication is mailed to CAEUG, immediately following publication and CAEUG is given credit.

The CAEUG newsletter is published eleven times annually. Contributions by members are encouraged and will be gratefully acknowledged in the newsletter. We have a policy of exchanging newsletters with other users groups across the nation. Several CAEUG member articles have already been picked up and reprinted.

Membership Costs.....

	First Yr.	Renewal
Individual	\$25.00	\$20.00
Family	\$30.00	\$25.00
Corporate	\$30.00	\$25.00
Associate	\$20.00	\$15.00

Beginner's SIG

Ask questions and discuss computer experiences with this group.

Such as:

1. New to Computers? (basic topics)
2. How to use the Web or download information
3. How to install hardware/software
4. Discuss how to troubleshoot hardware conflicts, learn boot up emergency tricks
5. What do you want to know??

SIG meets before regular meeting from 9:05 to 9:45

MEMBERS HELPLINE

Any member with a specific expertise can volunteer to be on the Members Helpline.

Beginner Helpline Billy Douglas

Beginner hardware problems .Dick Fergus

QuickBooks, Turbo Tax, IBM Lotus, MS Excel, Corel's Quattro Pro . . . Terry Moye

Hardware problems, Win 9x, 2K, XP & Linux John Spizzirri

Great Midwest Computer Show

Next show date
SUNDAY April 25, 2004
College of Dupage
9:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

The Midwest's oldest and largest
Multi Vendor PC show and sale for
Home & Business

COLLEGE OF DUPAGE
Main Arena of Physical Education Building
Corner of Park Blvd & College Road
Glen Ellyn, IL
FREE PARKING
Admission - \$7.00

www.CODSHOW.COM
E-mail address:
info@codshow.com

Great Midwest Computer Show © 2004 dates

March 28, 2004 at
Truman College
1145 West Wilson Avenue
Chicago, IL 60640

April 25, 2004 at COD
May 23, 2004 at COD
June 27, 2004 at COD
July 25, 2004 at COD
August 29, 2004 at COD
September 26, 2004 at COD
October 24, 2004 at COD
November 21, 2004 at COD
December 19, 2004 at COD

NEW Money Saving Offer CD of the Month Pre Order + Prepay = SAVE \$\$

When the Web site returns to the Internet it will have a new look to avoid any legal problems from Rick. The board does not want to waste the club's resources on attorney's fees. We will do it his way even though the former Web site had a copyright notice that says:

© Copyright 2000 caeug.org All rights reserved.

Perhaps after three years we deserve a new look. If you have any ideas for a new look, please contact John St. Clair at j_st_clair@yahoo.com or John Spizzirri at spizman@iwon.com.

At the CAEUG Board Meeting of February 28, 2004, the board passed a motion regarding the CD of the Month. In order to insure that CDs of the Month were created with as little waste as possible, the club will offer the CD of the Month on a pre order, prepaid basis. The charge will be \$50.00 a year for 10 months. This is \$20 annual savings over buying them for \$7 each month. Lynn Johnson, the treasurer, will keep track of anyone placing a 10-month order. Anyone wishing to place a prepaid order should contact:

Lynn (LynnJ69@hotmail.com).

This offer will commence at the March 2004 meeting.

March 2004

Minutes of CAEUG Meeting February 28, 2004

John Spizzirri called the meeting to order at 9:50 am. There were 30 in members in attendance and no visitors. The minutes were approved as published in the Newsletter, thanks to Dean Holste for filling in at the last meeting. The Financial Report showed a starting balance of \$3,132.17, income of \$277.00 and expenses of \$87.99 for a balance of \$3,321.18.

Old Business:

- The Nominating Committee has been working on a slate of candidates for the election in April. Anyone interested in running should contact AlCicora, Dick Major or Bert Orszula.
- John St Clair has volunteered to be the new Web Master. Anyone interested in working on the web site should contact John.
- Volunteers for the next COD show on April 25th were discussed. Anyone willing to represent the club at the show can get a free admission. The show lets two members in free and the club will reimburse two other members who work at our table. The reimbursement is given at the next monthly meeting.
- John asked for volunteers to write articles for the Newsletter. They can be sent to kgroce@iwon.com.

The Annual Picnic is scheduled for 6/26/2004. Mike and Roger have volunteered to head up the Picnic committee.

New Business:

- John asked if there was anyone who would like to volunteer to try new products and write reviews for the newsletter.
- The CD of the Month was reviewed. The basic CD is available at \$5.00 and the monthly CD is available at \$7.00.
- The formal meeting was then adjourned.
- Members' Forum addressed several problems that members were having with both hardware and software.
- We then had our traditional break with coffee and doughnuts, bagels, and muffins.

Abort, Retry, Ignore..

Raffle items included: Norton System Works, World Book and Webster's Encyclopedia, Scenes Brain Twister Collection and Web Page Construction Kit.

Frank Braman gave the presentation, on Ulead Picture Show 2 and Pinnacle video Software.

Respectfully submitted,
Al Skwara

Minutes of CAEUG Board Meeting February 28, 2004

The meeting started at 12:11pm.

Attending were: Billy Douglas, Kathy Groce, Lynn Johnson, Al Skwara, Rick Scalzo and John Spizzirri.

A motion was made to offer the CD of the Month on a pre order basis, \$50.00 a year for 10 months. Lynn Johnson would keep track of anyone placing a 10-month order. The motion was seconded and passed.

There was some discussion on the difficulty on putting PowerPoint presentations from the meetings on the web site. When presenters use transitions, it is almost impossible to place them on the web site.

There was a suggestion that the web site include a membership application. Anyone who visits the site and leaves any comments should be forwarded to the membership chairperson for a response.

On the web site moving to a new provider, the HTML will port but the server site code will not port.

The Domain registration will be transferred to John. John will forward to Rick the information on Technical Support and Administration

Costs are \$15.00 for each CAEUG.org, CAEUG.com, and CAEUG.net.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:35pm.

Under Attack by Cyber Worms By Ira Wilsker

If you use e-mail, as you most likely do, you may have noticed the recent increased onslaught of worms and viruses. Using a variety of techniques, the latest attacks are once again flooding our inboxes with dangerous content, as well as seeking out security holes in our systems and attacking us through our internet and network connections.

One insidious family of new pests is the group referred to as the "Bagel" or "Beagle" virus and worm family. Now spreading endemically, as I type this, are sixteen variants, referred to by the sequential letters "A" through "K". These nasties were explicitly designed to slip through most spam filters, and many antivirus scans by concealing their malicious payload in a password protected zip (compressed) file, which can only be opened by opening the email, and clicking on the attachment, and entering the password shown. The rapid appearance of the many variants also makes it easier to slip through our antivirus defenses, and more difficult to protect against. While most of us are reluctant to click on attachments from unknown senders, these creatures try to use "human engineering" to trick us into opening the email and activating the attachment. This is accomplished by spoofing the "From:" line and making it falsely appear to be from the management, tech support, email server, billing department, or other department of your ISP (Internet Service provider). They use an internal template to create a variety of subjects and messages incorporating the name of the ISP in order to appear to be authentic. Some of the common subject lines are "E-mail account security warning", "Warning about your e-mail account", "Email account utilization warning", "E-mail account disabling warning", and similar subjects. The body of the message typically starts with

some variation of "Dear user of (the name of your ISP)", followed by text indicating that your email account is about to be disabled, you have been sending out infected emails, the email server will be shut down, and similar attention getters. The punch line may be of the type "For more information see the attached file" or "Please, read the attachment for further details." To make it look even more legitimate and secure (and to bypass spam and virus filtering) it may contain a closing line to the effect of "For security reasons attached file is password protected" or "The password is (password)."

The infected e-mail is signed with "Sincerely," or "Best wishes," or some nicety, and often has a tagline "The team, [http://www.\(the name of your ISP\)](http://www.(the name of your ISP))"

Attached to the e-mail is an innocent looking file possibly with the filename (ending in ".zip") "Information", "Readme", "Document", "Message" or some other innocuous name. If this file is opened, and your antivirus software does not detect the payload, the computer will be instantly infected. Once infected, the worm will search your computer for any e-mail addresses, and use its built-in e-mail utility to replicate itself to the e-mail addresses found on your computer, again spoofing the name of the recipients ISP as the sender. If you think about it, this is both a clever way to entice even a suspicious victim into opening the attachment and infecting his computer, and an insidious thing to do to countless thousands of innocent victims. One of the common payloads in the Bagel/Beagle series is a utility that deactivates many of the popular antivirus programs, and prevents them from being updated, leaving the computer open to later attacks. Some versions also open a port through a firewall (ZoneAlarm is often targeted) allowing external "backdoor" access to the computer, and broadcasting the IP address of the

vulnerable computer over the Internet. Fortunately, many of the Bagel/Beagle variants have code in them that will cease their propagation between March 14 and 25.

In another trick, some of the new virus and worm writers are trying to fool us into believing that their content is safe by including a falsehood either in its subject or as a closing tagline that the message has been scanned by a major antivirus program (most often Norton AntiVirus). Just because an e-mail is from someone you know, and contains a line indicating that it is certified as safe, do not believe it. The creator of the worm is lying to you by concealing the real sender by spoofing the "From:" line to appear that it is from an acquaintance, and including the "certified virus free" tag.

The massive recent attacks by the authors of the Netsky, MyDoom, and Bagel/Beagle viruses and worms have created a battle among themselves, indicated by messages encoded in their respective payloads. According to several antivirus companies, the code includes attacks on each other, such as when Netsky attacks a computer already infected with MyDoom or Bagel/Beagle,

Netsky tries to deactivate them, while installing its own malicious code, and stating "We kill malware writers. They have no chance". The author of Bagel responded in a quickly released variant "Hey Netsky... Don't ruin our business. Wanna start a war?". Later variants of these three malicious products have continued the dispute.

Wouldn't it be nice if these virus authors spent more time and effort fighting each other, and less time trying to infect our computers?

FREE online virus scans are available at the following websites:

<http://www.housecall.antivirus.com>

<http://www.pandasoftware.com>

<http://www.bitdefender.com>

<http://www.us.mcafee.com>

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context, with proper credit given to the author. This article is brought to you by the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member.

NEW Money Saving Offer CD of the Month Pre Order + Prepay = SAVE \$\$

At the CAEUG Board Meeting of February 28, 2004, the board passed a motion regarding the CD of the Month. In order to insure that CDs of the Month were created with as little waste as possible, the club will offer the CD of the Month on a pre order, prepaid basis. The charge will be \$50.00 a year for 10 months. This is \$20 annual savings over buying them for \$7 each month. Lynn Johnson, the treasurer, will keep track of anyone placing a 10-month order. Anyone wishing to place a prepaid order should contact:

Lynn (LynnJ69@hotmail.com).

This offer will commence at the March 2004 meeting.

The Lamp Post
 Number 49 by John Spizzirri
 March 20, 2004



Spring is here. It's time for lightning storms. Your home and computer are at risk to the primal forces of nature. How can you protect yourself? First, understand the enemy (inclement weather). Here are some sites that may help. The University of Illinois at Chicago has a Web site with links to severe weather, lightning and tornados at <http://illiniweather.com/> . The Lightning Protection Institute (LPI <http://www.lightning.org/>) in Arlington Heights, Illinois has a number of articles on how to protect your home and equipment from lightning. They have a free brochure on home protection and a list of professional (lightning protection) installers in your area. Call for the brochure at 800-488-6864 or 847-577-7200. On April 3rd, the 24th annual Tornado and Severe Storm Seminar will be held at the Fermi National Accelerator Lab (<http://www.crh.noaa.gov/lot/severe/Fermilab04.htm>). FermiLab is located in Batavia off Kirk road on Pine Street (<http://www.fnal.gov/>). WGN TV's (<http://wgntv.trb.com/>) meteorologist, Tom Skilling, is the moderator of both four-hour sessions. I have been to this seminar for five years running. It is well worth the free admission and time spent. Second, protecting yourself is taking action. I watch for foul weather by checking the radar at <http://www.intellicast.com/> or at the Weather Channel site at <http://www.weather.com> . At the first hint of lightning storms, I shutdown my machines and unplug from the phone and electric power. I, also, use surge suppressors and uninterruptible power supplies (UPS) from D & B Power Associates (<http://www.dbpowerinc.com/>) in Batavia. The owner, Rob Humphreys, has presented to our club on previous occasions. I suggest you always unplug, unless you are looking for an excuse to get a new computer.

Mike Richter is an expert on burning CDs and DVDs. He has put a tutorial on his Web site. If you need to know anything about burning CDs, check out the site at <http://www.mrichter.com/cdr/welcome.htm> . He is also an opera connoisseur with many links about that genre and its performers.

The embedding of computers in so many devices has made our daily life much easier. I remember when starting an automobile was a learned process that was individual to each vehicle. Today, I can start my vehicle from a remote control, thanks to computers. Bill Gates envisions our refrigerators being able to order food for us before we run out of a particular commodity. All computers run software. Software can (and usually does) contain errors. When the application is simple, a software error usually causes little trouble. When the application is complex, errors can be very costly. The Mars rover had a software error that required a system reboot. Fortunately, Linux was the OS onboard the rover so that the reboot could be ordered from Earth. The mission was saved. An article I came across asked the question, "Can Software Kill?" The article stated that it already has killed human beings under medical care. I strongly suggest reading the article at <http://www.eweek.com/article2/0,1759,1544619,00.asp> . Medical care uses computers extensively. As medical care consumers, we are at the mercy of medical professionals who may or may not understand the technology they use. The article made me think seriously about what questions to ask my medical professionals about the equipment they want to use and the procedures they wish to perform on me.

Microsoft (MS <http://www.microsoft.com/>), it was reported in the New York Post (<http://www.nypost.com/>), is in negotiations with Time-Warner (<http://www.timewarner.com/>)

(con't on page 8)

to purchase AOL (<http://www.aol.com/>). This story may be true. MS, consistently, buys companies with which it cannot compete. MS has not been able to cut into the AOL client base with its MSN (<http://www.msn.com/>) product. I think the reasons for this failure are two fold. First, people do not like changing ISP's (Internet Service Provider). It is similar to changing residences. Address changes and getting used to the new surroundings are always unsettling. Second, the dynamic of the Internet is changing. Broadband is starting to make inroads. Those who cannot get or afford broadband are starting to understand that paying \$24.00 per month for a narrow band Internet connection is too expensive. People have been leaving AOL in droves over the last few years. They have not gone to MSN, but to inexpensive ISP's. Time-Warner is trying to dump AOL for that reason. This story may not be true in that the New York Post is the only media outlet to report it.

Microsoft CEO, Steve Ballmer, cancelled a long planned appearance at an MS developers conference to travel to Belgium to negotiate a settlement with the EU (European Union) representative in its anti-trust case against MS. Ballmer was unsuccessful in that negotiation. The EU may not be the pushover that the Bush administration was in its anti-trust case against MS. The EU wants the WMP (Windows Media Player) to be separate from Windows, so that competing products can be used in its place (Real Player <http://www.real.com/> , WinAmp <http://www.winamp.com/> , Sonique <http://sonique.lycos.com/> , or MusicMatch <http://www.musicmatch.com/home/>). The penalties that the EU can enforce are substantial. They can compel MS to rid Windows of WMP from all copies it sells worldwide and fine them \$250 million US. The EU's decision should come out in a few months.

Michael Robertson is the CEO of Lindows (<http://www.lindows.com/>). In his regular articles, Michael's Minutes (on their Web site), is one titled, 'Send Us Name Ideas'. It explains why China will be a hot bed of software piracy for the foreseeable future. He revealed that the average Chinese worker earns \$2 per day. At that rate it would require a half years pay to purchase a copy of Windows XP (if there were no income tax). The title of the article has to do with a court case that Lindows lost last month. MS sued Lindows in a European court over the use of the name Lindows. MS won and Lindows is prevented from using its name in about six countries. Lindows, also, must prevent people in those countries from coming to the Lindows Web site. Lindows refiled against MS to prevent MS from suing in any other country until the US case is settled.

MS went to court with Minnesota, the last hold out state, in the anti-trust case. The MS attorneys apologized to the jury for being a monopoly but denied that Minnesota consumers were overcharged for MS software. Sounds like an oxymoron to me.

MS has released a TEST version of the Windows XP SP2 (Service Pack) at <http://www.microsoft.com/sp2preview> . If you want to try it out, you can download it at that site. Personally, I would wait for the tested version before I would put it on any machine where I did not want to lose data.

Mozilla (<http://www.mozilla.org/>) has released a beta version 1.7 of its Web browser. The tested current version 1.6 is on the CAEUG Basic CD.

Novell (<http://www.novell.com/>), owner of SuSe Linux (<http://www.suse.com/us/>), announced a new release of the Linux distribution version 9.1. It will be available in stores in May. The new release will take advantage of 64 bit processing in the 2.6 kernel. The story is at http://www.suse.com/us/company/press/press_releases/archive04/91.html .

Those of you who use Windows 98, sometimes have problems with system files being changed

by program installations or via the Internet. When this happens, your computer may start acting weird or stop working correctly. A fix was built into the OS but MS never told you about it unless you poked around their Web site and found this URL;

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows98/usingwindows/maintaining/tips/beginner/sysfilecheck.asp>.

That URL (uniform resource locator) explains the use of the System File Checker program. It is a program that checks all your system files and replaces any that have been changed or corrupted. To use it click Start -> Programs -> Accessories -> System Tools. Select System Information -> Tools -> System File Checker. Run the scan for altered files to check the system files or Extract one file from the installation disk, if you know what you are looking for.

Those of you who use Windows ME, 2K, or XP are probably asking yourselves 'didn't MS provide a similar function for us?' The answer is yes and no. In Windows ME a function is provided called SFP (System File Protection), see

http://www.microsoft.com/whdc/hwdev/archive/sfp/WinME_sfp.msp. SFP runs continuously in the background to protect you from sloppy programming or malicious programs. Unfortunately, if a system file does become corrupt and SFP does not correct it, there is no way to manually fix it easily.

In Windows 2K and XP the function is called WFP (Windows File Protection) and works essentially the same as SFP, see

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows2000/techenthusiast/features/wfp.asp>. The difference in 2K and XP is that SFC (System File Checker) is provided as a backup to WFP. SFC in Win 2K and XP also provides extra functionality in that it holds a cache of system files on the hard drive so that replacement of corrupt files is fast and trouble free. The method of using SFC is significantly different, in that it is executed from the RUN command and not available in the System Information program. The details on how to use SFC are at

<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;310747>.

An overview of how all this works is at

<http://www.microsoft.com/whdc/hwdev/driver/sfp/wfp.msp>.

I found a poem called 'Elegy for a Profession' at the IT Unemployed Web site at

<http://www.itunemployed.com/xaraya/index.php?module=articles&func=display&aid=264>. The poem is a bitter rant about outsourcing overseas, but is worth the read.

Senator Christopher Dodd (Dem Connecticut <http://dodd.senate.gov/>) has introduced a bill called the U.S. Workers Protection Act. The bill, if passed into law, would require the states to hire Americans rather than outsource jobs overseas. I think the goal of the law may be a good idea, but it should be left up to the states and the people in the states to make that decision for themselves. Frankly, Dodd is sucking up to AFSCME (<http://www.afscme.org/>), a union that abandons its members, writes convoluted contracts (only a lawyer could understand), and exclusively supports the Democratic Party at the expense of its Republican and Independent membership. See <http://dodd.senate.gov/events/04/0217.htm>. If any law should be passed, it should compel the national government to hire Americans only for programs that affect national security and safety. Cost cutting in areas that do not affect security with a goal of lowering taxes is a good thing in my opinion.

Between you, me and The Lamp Post that's all for this month.

CAEUG
P. O. Box 2727
Glen Ellyn, IL 60138

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Meeting place and date information:

██████ > > > The next REGULAR meeting will be held at the
Glenside Public Library in Glendale Heights
at 9:45 am on
Saturday March 27, 2004

The library is located. Please park at the West side of the lot, away from the building. Thank you.
The meeting(s) are not library sponsored and all inquiries should be directed to John Spizzirri 630/858-6933. Individuals with disabilities who plan to attend this program and who require certain accommodations in order to observe and/or participate in the program are requested to contact CAEUG president, John Spizzirri, at least five (5) days prior to the program, so that reasonable accommodation can be made for them.

CONFIRMED Meeting dates for 2004 at Glenside Public Library:
April 24, May 22, June 26 CAEUG Picnic,

****NEW**** CD OF THE MONTH FORMAT: Is now available in two (2) flavors. The Basic CD will be packed with the standard items, while the CD of the Month will have NEW and updated items. Both are available at the meeting.

-> Our next meeting will be ~ Saturday, March 27
John Spizzirri will have a presentation of Microsoft Office 2003

Hope to see you there.